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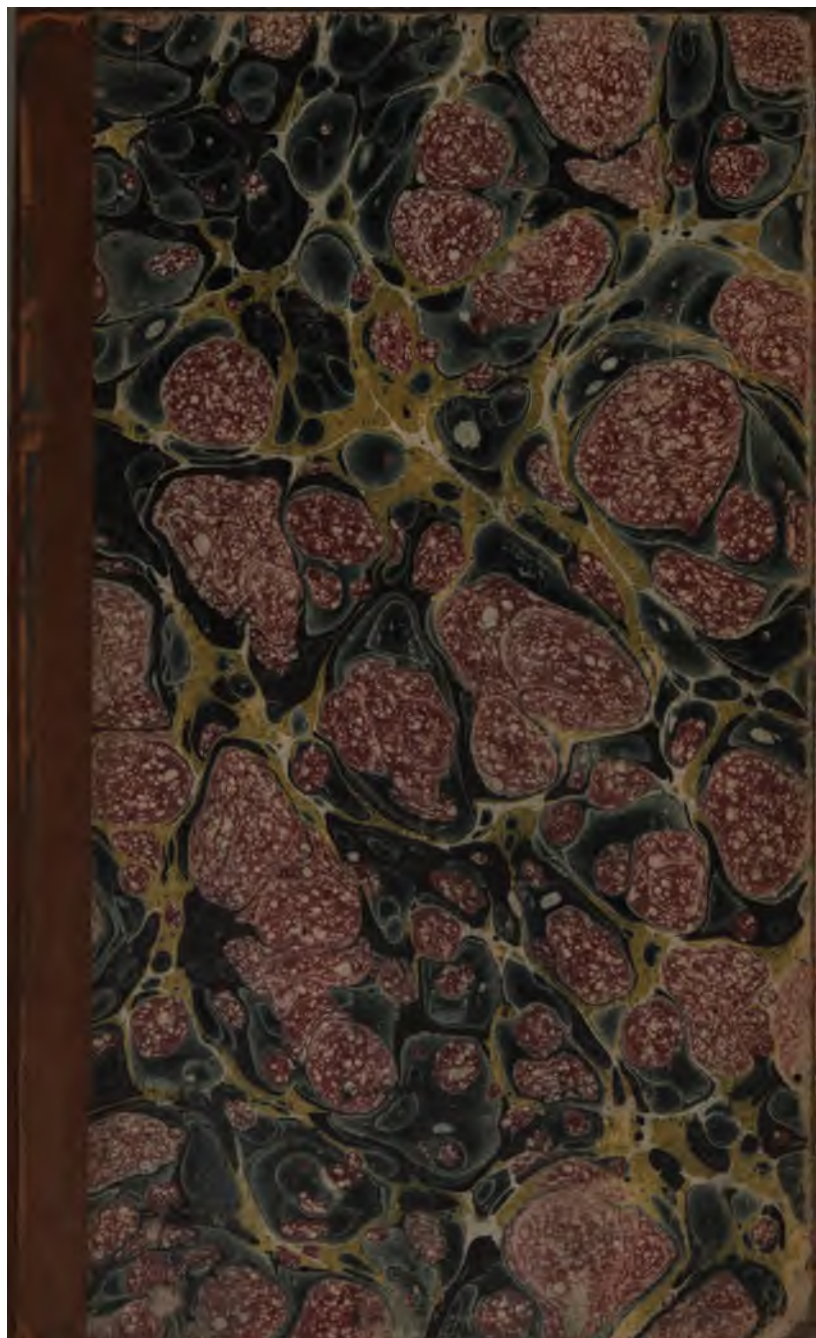
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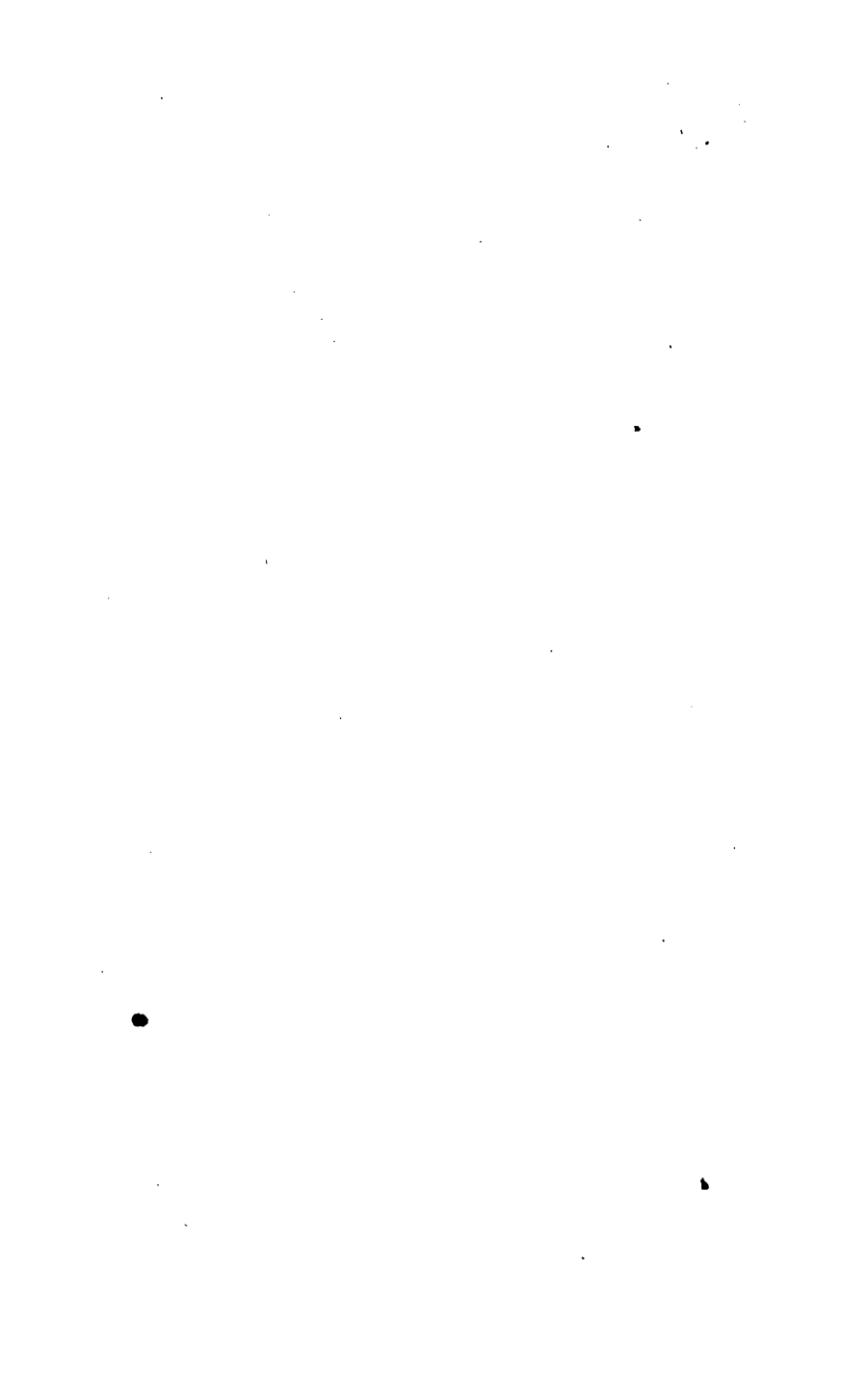


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A FEW  
PLAIN REMARKS  
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INFANT BAPTISM  
AND  
CONFIRMATION:

WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE OBJECTIONS OF  
**The Baptists.**

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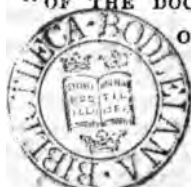
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"OF THE DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS, AND OF LAYING  
ON OF HANDS." (Heb. vi. 2.)



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THERE are many unlearned members of the Church of England, who frequently hear objections raised against the Doctrines and practices of their Church, but who, from want of information, are unable to reply to them.

It is for such well-meaning, but unlearned, persons, that the following pages are intended. There are *many* doctrines and practices of our Church, which are violently attacked by Dissenters; the present remarks, however, are chiefly confined to the defence of INFANT BAPTISM and CONFIRMATION.

I shall divide the subject into two parts; giving, in the first, our reasons for baptizing Infants, and for using *Affusion*, or *Pouring*, rather than *Dipping*; and, in the second, explaining the nature and importance of Confirmation, and the reasons of the Church of England for retaining it amongst her Services.

In order to render my remarks on Baptism as simple and intelligible as possible, I shall arrange them in the form of a Churchman's answers to the objections of a Baptist; placing each answer opposite to the objection to which it refers.

## PART I.

*On the Baptism of Infants.*

## BAPTIST'S OBJECTIONS.

1. Infants ought not to be baptized, because we do not read in the New Testament that any persons were baptized by the Apostles, except believers, that is,—persons who having come to years of discretion, made a profession of Repentance and Faith.

2. If our Saviour had intended that Infants should be baptized, the Apostles would have been sure to have recorded that this was His will.

3. There is nothing in Scripture which can in any way *countenance the notion* that Infants may be baptized.

## CHURCHMAN'S ANSWERS.

1. Before you can prove this, you must make it appear that there were no Infants, nor children not come to years of discretion, in "the household" of Lydia, (Acts xvi. 15.) in that of the Jailor at Philippi, who "was baptized, he *and all his*," (Acts xvi. 33.) nor in that of Stephanas. (1 Cor. i. 16.)

2. By no means, but just the contrary. Infants always *had* been admitted into Covenant with God under *the old Dispensation*, and therefore, if Christ had intended that this should *cease to be the case* under *the new Dispensation*, He would surely have expressly said so. But as He did not expressly say so, we conclude that children may be made members of *the Gospel Church*, as they used to be made members of *the Jewish Church*.

3. When our Saviour took children in His arms and blessed them, He said "*of such is the Kingdom of God.*" (Mark x. 14.) Now He either meant *the Kingdom of God in*



## OBJECTIONS.

## ANSWERS.

*Heaven, or the Kingdom of God on Earth*, (that is, His Church.) Supposing that He meant His Heavenly Kingdom, then surely, if children are fit to be subjects of the Kingdom of God in Heaven, they are fit to be members of His Church on Earth. But if He meant the Church, His Earthly Kingdom, the question is settled at once; and by this declaration of our Lord's, children may be baptized, for it is by Baptism that men are made members of His Church; so that which-ever way we understand this saying of Christ's, it still *countenances the notion* that Infants may be baptized. Again, St. Paul says, (1 Cor. vii. 14.) that if a Christian man is married to a Heathen woman, or a Heathen man to a Christian woman, the unbelieving party is sanctified by the believing; that is, the marriage is regarded as a Christian marriage, for the sake of the believing party; "else" says St. Paul, "were your children unclean; but *now are they HOLY.*" But if the offspring of a Christian marriage are "*holy*," they are then fit to be members of Christ's Church, that is, fit to

## OBJECTIONS.

## ANSWERS.

be baptized. The above, then is another passage which countenances *the notion*. Again, St. Paul, both in his Epistle to the Ephesians, and in that to the Colossians, expressly addressed children: (Eph. vi. 1.—Col. iii. 20.) and yet these Epistles are addressed to “the saints and faithful brethren.” (Eph. i. 1.—Col. i. 2.) The “*children*,” then, whom he admonishes, were “*saints and faithful brethren*,” that is, were baptized members of the Church, regarded as “*holy*.” (1 Cor. vii. 14.) This then, is another passage, which *countenances the notion*.

4. None of the first Christian Churches baptized Infants.

4. So far from this being true, the fact is, that *all the first Christian Churches did* baptize Infants. There are very many proofs that they did so. The following, however, is sufficient:—150 years after the death of the Apostles, a Council of 66 Bishops held a consultation on the question, whether a newly-born child might be baptized before it was 8 days old, or whether its Baptism should be delayed until the 8th day, as circumcision used to be amongst the

## OBJECTIONS.

5. The Church of England says, that all Infants, who are baptized, are converted and saved.

6. The Church of England says, that all baptized persons are regenerated, and that is the same thing.

## ANSWERS.

Jews. It was decided by the Council that *it might be baptized before* the 8th day, and not a word was said against Infant Baptism, every one was agreed on that point, it being a thing taken for granted, as universally allowed; the only subject of debate was, whether the Infant should necessarily be kept unbaptized till the 8th day or not.

5. The Church of England nowhere lays down such a stupid and monstrous doctrine, nor says any thing which can give the least encouragement to such a notion.

6. The Church of England certainly does say, that those who receive Baptism rightly are *regenerated*; but that is quite another thing from saying that they are converted and saved.

The sense in which the Church used the word *Regeneration* is very different from that in which Dissenters use it. When she says that a person is *regenerated*, she means, that he is *put into a state of Salvation*, that is, *a state in which he may be saved*, not

## OBJECTIONS.

## ANSWERS.

one in which he is *sure* of being saved.

In this sense every one who is made a member of Christ's Church by Baptism is regenerated; he is brought into a society, *in which Salvation is attainable*, into a Kingdom over which Christ is King, and in which the Holy Spirit dwells and acts. This, therefore, is a new state to him. He is said to be regenerated, or born again, into this state of Salvation. The *principle* of Spiritual Life is given him, but unless he is daily renewed by the Holy Spirit, and enabled by God's grace, to nourish the Holy Principle within him, he will never grow up to spiritual maturity, or, in the end be recognized by God as His son, since "they," only, "that are led by the Spirit of God" are recognized as "the sons of God;" though grafted into the true Vine, he "bears no fruit," and therefore is "taken away" by the Heavenly Husbandman; (John xv. 1, 2.) he is a branch that "abideth not in the vine," he is therefore cast "forth as a branch and withered." (John xv. 6.)

From all this, therefore, it is

## OBJECTIONS.

7. We do not think that this is what the Bible means by Regeneration.

8. We think it best to observe nothing which is not commanded in the Scriptures.

## ANSWERS.

plain that when the Church speaks of baptized persons as "*regenerated*," she does *not* mean that they are converted, or that they will necessarily be saved, although in the case of baptized Infants, *who die before they commit actual sin*, she ventures to pronounce that *they* are undoubtedly saved.

7. If *you* do not think so, every *Christian writer* from the time of the Apostles, for a thousand years and upwards, *did* think so. And there is no doubt whatever that *all* the early Christians, from the very days of the Apostles, *did* think so too. It is only in modern times that the term Regeneration has been used in the same sense with *Conversion* and *Renewal*. And the Church of England wisely retains the Ancient sense of the word, thinking that all the Christians who lived just after the Apostles were more likely to know the true meaning of the term, than persons who live at this great distance of time from them.

8. Here you are inconsistent. You keep the Sabbath on the *first* day of the week,



## OBJECTIONS.

## ANSWERS.

instead of the *seventh*, and this is not commanded in the Scriptures. God rested *on the seventh day*, and commanded that it should be kept holy. There is no command in the Scriptures to keep the *first day* holy, and yet you do so. All that is said on the subject is, that the Apostles used to meet on the first day of the week, and that St. John had a vision on that day, but it is nowhere said that *they kept the Sabbath* on that day, or that we ought to do so. We know *why* you do it. You do it because all Christians from the Apostles' time (with a very few exceptions)\* have kept the first day of the week, as a Sabbath in honor of Christ, who rose from the dead on that day. And it is *partly* on the same ground, that we baptize Infants (because all Christians from the Apostles' time downwards have done so.) Again, you profess to be guided in all things by the Bible. How do you know what books form part of the Bible and what do not? You

\* There is still a Sect, who keep the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week, and who call themselves *Sabbatarians*.

## OBJECTIONS.

## ANSWERS.

may look the bible through, from beginning to end, but you will find no list of the books which ought to compose the Scriptures. There are some of the books of the Bible, which contain *proof within themselves that they come from God*, such as prophecies which have been fulfilled, and the like; but how can you prove that other books which contain only histories or moral precepts, such as for instance, the book of Esther,—how, I ask, can you prove that books like this form part of God's word, and have a right to be bound up in the Bible? Why, *because they have always been believed to be part of the word of God,—because, there has never been any doubt in the Church of God that they are so.* This is your reason for believing it.

But if you allow this reason to influence you in one thing, you cannot consistently refuse to let it do so in another. You keep the Sabbath on the first day of the week, because Christians in all ages have done so, *though the Bible does not command it.* You are also satisfied with the consent of all

## OBJECTIONS.

We think the use of Sponsors (or God-fathers and God-mothers) unscriptural and needless, as it is impossible for one human being to answer for another.

## ANSWERS.

Christians as to the books of the Bible, though you find nowhere in the Scriptures a list of the books which you are to regard as inspired. Why then should you pay no attention to the universal consent of all Christians (until modern times) on the subject of Infant Baptism; If it be sufficient reason for altering the day of the Sabbath, surely it would also be sufficient reason for baptizing Infants, even if there were nothing in Scripture to countenance the practice.

9. Infant Baptism being proved to be lawful, the use of Sponsors follows as a matter of necessity.

Some one, of course, must present a child, who is unable to present himself. This duty naturally devolves on the Parents of the children, and amongst the first Christians, Parents usually acted as Sponsors for their own children, except when the children of Heathens or Infidels were occasionally baptized, in which case, other believers presented the children instead of the Parents, and were called God-fathers and God-mothers. But since the Parents, even though



## OBJECTIONS.

## ANSWERS.

they profess Christianity, may be unworthy and irreligious characters, the Church of England (to obviate such difficulties) has ordered *in all cases* that they should not be Sponsors for their own children, but that three persons who are *Communicants* should undertake that office.\*

The duties of the Sponsors are, simply these,—to present the child to Baptism, and to undertake that it shall be taught its responsibilities and duties, as a baptized member of Christ's Church, as soon as it shall be able to learn them. The answers made by the Sponsors are therefore *virtually* promises, that it shall be brought up in a godly and christian manner.

\* These rules, it must be confessed, are not adhered to so frequently as they ought to be.

*On the Mode of Administering Baptism.*

## BAPTIST'S OBJECTIONS.

1. We object to Baptism, as it is administered in the Church of England, because it is always administered by sprinkling a little water on the ace, instead of by dipping the whole person under the water.

2. But the very word "*baptize*" means to dip, and is never used in any other sense.

## CHURCHMAN'S ANSWERS.

1. Baptism is generally (nay, almost always) administered in the Church by *pouring* water on the baptized person. This we admit, but it is not *necessary* that this should be the case. If you refer to the rules in the Baptismal service in the Prayer-Book, you will find, that both in the "Public Baptism of Infants," and in "the Baptism of such as are of Riper years," the Priest is required *either to dip, or to pour*, water upon the person whom he is baptizing. So that any one may have his children baptized by Immersion, or may be baptized in that manner himself, if he be a proper Candidate, and have not been previously baptized in his Infancy.

It is *not* the case, that the Church of England requires *sprinkling*: it is nowhere enjoined, and, if adopted by any one, is an irregular practice, for no Clergyman has any authority to baptize except either by Dipping or Pouring.

2. The word baptize certainly does mean to *dip*, but, in the New Testament, it is

## OBJECTIONS.

## ANSWERS.

frequently used in another sense. Thus, in Luke xi. 38, the Pharisee (who had asked our Lord to dine with him) " marvelled that He had not first washed before dinner." Now St. Mark, when he relates the circumstance, says, that the Pharisee's astonishment was excited, because our Lord and His Disciples had " not *washed their hands* before dinner." (See Mark vii. 2, 3, 4.) But in the Greek Testament (which is the true one, that is, the one written by the Apostles) the passage in St. Luke is, " The Pharisee marvelled that He was not first *baptized* before dinner." It is, therefore, plain that the mere washing of a person's hands is called " baptizing " him, so that, in this case, the word " baptize " does not mean to dip a person under the water.

St. Mark (vii. 4.) says, that " the Pharisees and all the Jews, when they come from the market, except they wash, eat not." In the Greek, it is, " *except they baptize themselves, eat not.*" It is not likely that the Jews dipped themselves under water every time they

## OBJECTIONS.

3. When our Saviour was baptized by John the Baptist, he was immersed, therefore

## ANSWERS.

came from the market; but it is *very likely* that they washed their hands, face, or feet; and this partial washing is called "baptizing themselves."

It would appear, therefore, that in this case also the word *baptize* does not mean to dip.

St. Paul, (Heb. ix. 10.) speaking of certain Jewish ordinances, calls them, "meats and drinks, and divers washings;" which in the Greek, is "meats and drinks, and divers *baptisms*." Now, if we refer to Numbers viii. 7. we shall find one of these *Baptisms* enjoined. "*Sprinkle* water of purifying upon them, &c." And again, in Numbers xix. 17, 18, 19, 20, we find an account of another of these *Baptisms*, which consisted partly in *sprinkling*, partly in bathing. And from both these passages we may learn, that the word *Baptism* does not always or necessarily signify *dipping*, but that it may mean a partial application of water, such as would follow on pouring or sprinkling.

3. When our Saviour was baptized, He went down into the water, and *may have been*

## OBJECTIONS.

Christians should be baptized in the same way.

## ANSWERS.

immersed ; but of this we cannot be sure ; He may have *stood* in the water, and water may have been poured upon Him while so standing. Besides, you can prove nothing from the manner in which our Saviour was baptized, because He received John's baptism. The Baptism which we are commanded to receive is *Christian* Baptism, not *John's*. It was instituted by our Saviour, just before His Ascension into Heaven. Matt. xxviii. 18, 19 ) St. Paul's conduct to the disciples at Ephesus, (Acts xix. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) proves that John's Baptism (which our Saviour received) is different from Christian Baptism ; although it was doubtless, typical and emblematic of it, and preparatory to it.

4. All the Baptisms mentioned in the Scripture, as performed by the Apostles and others, were performed by Immersion. See particularly the case of the Ethiopian Eunuch, (Acts viii. 36—39.)

4. We do not deny that some of the Baptisms mentioned in Scripture were performed by dipping : nay more, we think Immersion the better mode of administration (as our Church evidently does) but we think *pouring* also lawful, and maintain that some of the Baptisms mentioned in Scripture were performed in

## OBJECTIONS.

## ANSWERS

that way. In the case referred to, of the Eunuch, we think it highly probable that he was Immersed, yet it cannot be *proved* that he was, or that any other person was. We are nowhere told that the baptized persons went *under* the water, and (as we have said in the case of our Saviour) we are at liberty to conclude that they may have stood in the water, and so have had water poured upon them. But we maintain that there are some cases mentioned in Scripture, in which the parties could not have been immersed.

The first Christian Baptism recorded in the Acts of the Apostles is that of the 3,000 persons, who were baptized by St. Peter and the other Apostles on the day of Pentecost. (Acts ii. 41.) Now, could 12 men have *dipped* 3,000 on one day? Besides, the day of Pentecost is the same as our Whit-Sunday, which occurs at the end of May or beginning of June, at which time the brook Kedron (the only river near Jerusalem, and which is at best a shallow stream) is always nearly dried up. How then could 3,000 men have

## OBJECTIONS.

## ANSWERS.

been dipped in it? And in what but a river could so large a number have been dipped at all? It seems far more probable that they were baptized by pouring small quantities of water upon each of them.

Again, St. Peter, at the house of Cornelius, after that the Centurion and his family were converted, determined that they should be baptized. Now, here was no want of water. Cæsarea, in which Cornelius lived, was on the Sea-coast, but St. Peter, instead of proposing that they should go down to the water, asks that water should be brought to them. "Can any man forbid water," says he, "that these should be baptized who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" (Acts x. 47, 48.) This does not look as if he intended to dip them.

Again, the Jailor at Philippi and all his family were baptized by Paul and Silas, on the night of their conversion, in the prison. It is not very probable that they had water enough in the prison to dip them in, but it is exceedingly probable, that there was enough to pour on them.

## OBJECTIONS.

5. But Baptism is said to be a Burial with Christ, and it must be admitted, that dipping is the most significant representation of a burial.

## ANSWERS.

5. It is by no means certain that any *outward* representation of Burial was intended in Baptism,—at all events neither dipping, nor pouring represent the peculiar form of *Christ's burial*, who was laid in a Sepulchre hewn out of a rock, and not covered with *earth* at all.—However, if Baptism were intended *outwardly* to represent Burial, we admit that dipping is the most significant representation of it, because the person baptized, being laid under water, represents burial under the earth, and his re-appearance above the water, represents his rising with Christ. But still “pouring” is also a representation of Burial, because it represents the heaping of earth upon the party buried.

On all these accounts, we feel convinced that it is of no consequence, whether Baptism be administered by *dipping* or *pouring*, and consequently, since our climate is so cold, and for the sake of avoiding much inconvenience, we generally administer it by pouring, though, at the same time, we are always ready to administer it the other way, if requested to do so.

*Summary of the above.*

It appears, therefore, that we practice Infant Baptism, for the following reasons:—



Because, we know that Infants used to be made members of *the Jewish Church*, and we think, that if Christ had intended them not to be admitted members of *His Church*, He would have taken care to have left an express command to that effect ; but because there is no such command, we conclude, that it is His Will, that they should continue to enjoy the same privileges under the Gospel, which they used to enjoy under the Law ;

Because, we find that the Apostles baptized families and households, and it has never been proved to us, that there were no Infants in those families and households ;

Because, we read that our Lord, speaking of children, said "of such is the Kingdom of God ;" (see answer 3.) and that St. Paul calls the children of christian parents "holy."

Because, we learn from history, that the first christians baptized Infants ;

Because, we know that it was the universal custom, until the Baptists opposed it in modern times, and that they cannot produce a single passage of Scripture, which directly forbids it.

It also appears from the above, that we do not generally baptize by Immersion ;

Because, the word "Baptize," as it is used in the New Testament, does not always mean to *dip*, but sometimes to *apply water partially* ;

Because, in the Baptisms mentioned in Scripture, it cannot be *strictly* proved in any one case, that Immersion was used, and in several cases, it appears quite impossible that it *could* have been used.

Because, if Baptism be intended *outwardly* to represent Burial, the representation is conveyed by *Pouring* as well as by *Dipping*, though not so significantly.

## PART II.

*On Confirmation, or "the laying on of hands."*

CONFIRMATION is a solemn rite in which persons, who have been previously baptized, are brought before their Bishop, or Chief Minister, in order that he may lay his hands upon them, and pray to God to send down the Holy Spirit to take possession of their hearts.

Before that the true intent and nature of this ordinance can be rightly understood, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the different orders of the Christian Ministry, and of their respective duties.

In the New Testament, we read of three different ranks of Ministers; the first and highest are called Apostles, the second, Bishops, and the third, Deacons.

At the time of our Saviour's ascension into Heaven, there were only eleven Apostles; Judas, one of the twelve, having betrayed his Master, and hanged himself. Matthias, however, was soon elected to fill his place, (Acts i. 26.) St. Paul was afterwards added to the number, and after him many others; thus "*James, the Lord's brother*," is spoken of as an Apostle by St. Paul,\* (Gal. i. 19.) although he was not

\* It has always been believed, that "*James, the Lord's brother*" was the chief Pastor of the Church of Jerusalem. He certainly seems to have had authority in that Church. When St. Peter was delivered out of Prison, his first care was that his safety should be made known to "*James and the brethren*," (Acts xii. 17.) When the Apostles met in council, at Jerusalem, it appears that James presided, and delivered his opinion with authority, (Acts xv. 6—13—19.) Again, on St. Paul's arrival in Jerusalem, after his travels, he lost no time in seeing the chief Minister of the Church, accordingly, on "the day following," he "went in with us unto James, and all the Elders were present."

one of the twelve, (being a distinct person from James, the Son of Zebedee, and James, the Son of Alphaeus.)

Epaphroditus, also is styled an Apostle by St. Paul; \* Barnabas is also mentioned as if he too were an Apostle. (1 Cor. ix. 5, 6.) It therefore appears, that there were others besides the original Apostles, who bore that name and office. St. Paul speaks of them as "his brethren the Apostles of the Churches, and the glory of Christ."†

These Apostles, or Chief Ministers, had the power of governing and arranging all things in the Church, and of ordaining the Bishops and Deacons, of whom we find an account in 1 Tim. iii, and who are also mentioned Philip. i. 1.

Their usual method in founding a Church in any place was to appoint a sufficient number of these Bishops and Deacons, with authority to preach the word of God, to administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, to visit the sick members of the Church, and to execute other parts of the ministerial office. But although they did this, they never forgot that they themselves were the persons to whom these solemn duties had been immediately entrusted by Christ, and that these *inferior* Ministers were acting only through the authority which *they in their turn*, had delegated

\* See Philippians ii. 25, where the word "Messenger" is *Apostle* in the original. "Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow soldier, but your Apostle." The context seems to imply, that he was chief Minister of the Church at Philippi; and history tells us that he was.

† See 2 Cor. viii. 23. In this passage also, the word in our English Testament is "Messengers," but the original word is "*Apostles*."



to them, and consequently, they kept up a strict superintendence over them. They used to visit the different Churches from time to time, to set right those things which had fallen into disorder, and to sanction, by their authority, all that the inferior Ministers had regularly done in their absence.

Thus, St. Paul, in the exercise of his duty as an Apostle, wrote Epistles or letters to the various Churches which he had established, and gave them all necessary directions. We find him also calling together the "Elders" or Clergymen, of the Ephesian Church, (Acts xx. 17.—35.) giving them a solemn charge and admonition, speaking to them with all authority as their spiritual superior.

As the first Apostles grew old, and began to die off, they saw the necessity of fixing certain of their own order in different parts of the world, that they might (each in his own district) execute the same authority which they themselves had been accustomed to exercise in the Universal Church.

In this way Timothy was sent to Ephesus, with full authority to rule over that Church, to ordain and to govern the inferior Ministers, "committing the truth to faithful men, who should be able to teach others also."

In the same way, Titus was sent into Crete, "to set in order things that were wanting, and to ordain elders in every City."

It is plain then, that there were in those days these three orders of Christian Ministers :—

1st. Apostles, (called also "Angels\* of the Churches.")

2nd. Bishops.

3rd. Deacons.

Now, soon after the Apostles died, the gift of miracles was withdrawn from the Church,—that is, the Ministers of the Church were unable to do the same wonderful deeds which they used to do. They could no longer give sight to the blind, nor speech to the dumb,—they could no longer raise the dead, nor heal the sick. All these wonderful powers were necessary at first to convince the people that they came from God; but when the Gospel had obtained a footing in the world, they were withdrawn, because they were no longer necessary. When this came to pass, the chief Ministers of the Church were ashamed to call themselves any longer *apostles*, since they could no longer do what the Apostles had done. They therefore dropped that name, which they looked upon as something too sacred for ordinary men, and contented themselves with the name of Bishops, which had formerly belonged to the second order of Ministers.† How then, it will be asked, were they to be distinguished from each other? Why, the second order from that time were

\* See Revelations ii. and iii. In these Chapters the Messages to the seven Churches of Asia, are addressed, in each case, to "*the Angel*" or chief Minister of the Church. We know that there were *many* ministers in each of these Churches, for there had been several elders in the Church of Ephesus, 30 years previously, when St. Paul addressed them (Miletus, (Acts xx. 17.) The person who is styled the "*Angel of the Church*" was the chief Pastor, such as James, the Lord's brother, Timothy, Titus, Epaphroditus, &c.

† Let it be remembered, that there is good authority for these statements.

called Priests (or Elders;\* so that those who were first called Apostles, were now called Bishops, those who were first called Bishops, were now styled Priests (or Elders), while the Deacons retained their original name, and from that time to this the three orders have been known respectively by these three titles :—

1st. Bishops,

2nd. Priests,

3rd. Deacons ;

the Bishops being the representatives and direct successors of the Apostles,—and the inferior Ministers, the Priests and Deacons, being assistants of the Bishops and solemnly ordained or appointed by them. I have dwelt on this subject, because as I have already remarked, unless it is clearly understood that there are three distinct orders of Ministers, it is impossible to have correct notions with regard to Confirmation.

You will therefore understand, from what has been laid down, that the Bishops are the *chief officers* in the Church of Christ, and that their sanction and authority is necessary to render valid any ministerial act of the inferior Officers.†

\* The word Priest, is merely a corrupt or short way of writing Presbyter, which is the Greek for *Elder*. So that Priest and Elder are the same.

This title seems at the first to have been applied to all who bore rule in the Church, and to have meant much the same as our English word Clergyman, though afterwards, as it is observed above, it was appropriated to Ministers of the second order.

† It is on this account, that Churchmen cannot *consistently* recognize Dissenting Teachers as true Ministers of Christ. They may *respect* those who are good and sincere amongst them, and *esteem* them as pious and well-meaning persons, but they cannot regard them as Christian *Ministers*.

A true Christian Minister is one who is both *inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost* to take that office upon him, and who is also *outwardly commissioned to do so by persons possessed of authority to ordain others*. The



It was to the Apostles and their representatives to "the end of the world," (see Matt. xxviii. 16—20.) that our Saviour gave the commission to baptize and teach all nations; and

inward call gives the *will to act as a Minister*, and the *disposition to do so* faithfully and zealously, but it cannot of itself confer *authority to do so*. By way of example, a man may have a great desire to be a Magistrate, an officer in the Militia, or to employ himself in public business. This *desire* will make him fill the situation usefully and diligently, if he should be appointed to it. But the *desire of acting* does not make him a Magistrate or other officer. He must first have a regular appointment from the Queen, signed by the Lord Lieutenant of the County. This *appointment* or commission gives him his authority; and even if he has no wish to act, or to do his duty in that capacity, yet, having been appointed, he is nevertheless in office, and all his official acts are recognized as such by the law of the land.

Now, what the Queen is to the Country, that Jesus Christ is to His Church; He is King and head over all things to it. What the Lords Lieutenant are in their Counties, that the Bishops are in their Dioceses; they receive their authority from Christ, and act for Him just as the Lords Lieutenant receive their authority from the Queen, and act for her. And as the Lords Lieutenant are the only persons empowered by the Queen to appoint Magistrates, Officers, &c. so the Bishops are the only persons empowered by Christ to appoint Ministers. And precisely in the same way as a man who has a wish to be a Magistrate is not one, till he receives his appointment from the Lord Lieutenant, so a man who has an *inward call* to the Ministry, is not a *Minister*, until he receives his Ordination from the Bishop. And, moreover, precisely as a man may be appointed, without a desire for the appointment, and is therefore in office (though an inefficient and unfit person); so a man without an *inward call* to the Ministry, may receive the outward Ordination, and (though an unfit and improper person, and not strictly speaking, a *true Minister of Christ*) his official acts will be valid, and will not be without a blessing to those who use them in simple faith in God's promise, and in Christ's ordinances, without references to the unworthiness of the instrument.

It is a common notion, that the Queen appoints the Bishops; no King or Queen on earth can do so. The Queen names a person to fill a Bishopric, but this is all she can do in the matter; for if the other Bishops do not ordain him, he cannot be a Bishop, nor have any authority in the Church. Of course, unless the person named by the Queen be notoriously unfit for his office, the other Bishops cannot well refuse to ordain him, and consequently, there is no instance, of late, of their refusing to do so. But they have the power, and would exercise it in an extreme case. They derive their authority from Christ, through the Apostles and their successors.



consequently, though they have in all ages authorised the inferior Ministers (the Priests and Deacons) to act for them, yet they have always considered it necessary to *put their seal*, as it were, on their ministerial acts; and they have always done this, in the case of Baptism, by *solemnly laying their hands on those who have been baptized*, and by *praying over them*.<sup>\*</sup> By so doing, they stamp the transaction with proper authority, and prevent all doubts as to its validity.

The person baptized is, by the act of Confirmation, recognized as a member of the Church, by one who has full power and authority to do so.

It was with this view, that St. Peter and St. John, were sent (as Apostles) to Samaria, to ratify the Baptisms which had been administered by Philip the Deacon, (Acts viii. 14—17.)

The people of Samaria had been converted by Philip, and had been baptized by him, but as he was only a Deacon, (which is the lowest of the inferior orders of Ministers,) two Apostles were sent down from Jerusalem to ratify and *confirm* what he had done.

We find in this case, that when the Apostles laid their hands on the Samaritan converts, “they received the Holy Ghost.” (Acts viii. 17.) We also find that when St. Paul laid his hands on those persons at Ephesus, whom he had just before baptized, “the Holy Ghost came upon them.” (Acts xix. 5.) On these grounds it has always been believed from that time

<sup>\*</sup> In the Primitive Church, Confirmation was always regarded as a “Seal” put upon Baptism, and an important (if not an essential) part of that Sacrament.

to this, that when the rite of Confirmation (or as St. Paul calls it, "laying on of hands," (see Heb. vi. 2.) is *humbly* and *faithfully* used, the same results will follow.—Not, of course, that we may look for any of the *miraculous* gifts of the Spirit, such as were bestowed on the first Christians for *especial* purposes, (for, as I have already observed, they have been withheld for many ages); but I repeat, that it has always been believed, from the Apostles' time to this, that in the case of *those who humbly and reverently use this ordinance as an appointed means of grace*, the prayers offered up by the Bishop on their behalf, beseeching God to send down His Spirit upon them, are neither unheard nor unanswered.

On this account, it has been usual in all ages of Christ's Church to confirm baptized persons as soon as it may conveniently be done after their Baptism. Those who are baptized after they come to years of discretion, should (as our own Church enjoins) embrace the very first opportunity of receiving Confirmation; whereas it seems only reasonable that those who are baptized in Infancy should wait until they are able to understand the nature of their Baptismal engagements, and in their own persons to undertake what was promised for them in their Infancy.\*

By far the greater number of those who are confirmed in this country consists of persons who were baptized while they were yet Infants, and consequently *Confirmation has generally come to be regarded as an act in which a person (now come to years of discretion) takes upon himself those*

\* This custom, however reasonable, is peculiar to the Western Church. In the Eastern Churches, Infants receive Imposition of hands, as soon as they have been baptized.

*things which were formerly undertaken in his behalf by his sureties.* So few were the instances of Adult Baptism, when the Prayer Book was compiled,\* that the Confirmation Service seems hardly to contemplate the case of any but those baptized in Infancy, although the direction at the end of the Service for Adult Baptism, makes Confirmation the duty of those also who are baptized after they come to years of discretion.

From these observations, you may readily perceive how solemn and edifying an ordinance that of Confirmation is, if decently conducted, and humbly and reverently used.

But, alas, how grievously is it too often profaned !

What a distressing sight is it to witness (as we are too frequently compelled to witness) parties of ignorant boys and girls carried to a neighbouring town to be Confirmed, apparently without a thought of the Dreadful Majesty of that Great and Terrible God, to whom they are about to profess allegiance and service ! Who would suppose that they were on the road to the House of the Lord, there to bend their knees before the Most High, and, in the presence of one of His Chief Ministers, to promise that they will be the Faithful Servants and Soldiers of CHRIST JESUS THE CRUCIFIED ? Who would not rather imagine that they were bound for some scene of mirth and amusement, that they were about to mingle in "the pomps and vanities of the World," rather than to profess to give them up for ever.

\* For many years after the English Prayer-Book was first published, there was no Service for Adult Baptism. So universal in those days was the practice of Infant Baptism.



The loud laughter, the giddy demeanour, the careless and impudent stare, all bespeak great ignorance or indifference, and make the heart of the sober Christian to ache, when he reflects that these same thoughtless children, are about to enter into the presence of the 'King of kings,' and there to declare that they are willing to take up THE CROSS, and follow their Crucified Saviour, in humility, patience, and self-denial, and be ordered by the Governance of His Holy Spirit, unto their life's end. Who can wonder at the reproach, the ridicule, the scorn, with which this Holy Ordinance of Confirmation is continually assailed? Who can be surprised if unlearned and ignorant persons speak contemptuously of Christ's Holy Baptism, as it is administered in our Church, when they see the Baptismal Covenant outwardly ratified and sealed in the persons of those who scarcely know what Baptism really is. But, on the other hand, it is to be hoped, that the evil, in many cases, is more in *appearance* than in *reality*, and that very many of those who are Confirmed, are deeply sensible of the solemn engagement on which they are entering, and are sincerely desirous that they may be enabled to fulfil it; nay more, it cannot be doubted that very many do receive Grace and Strength, whereby they *are* enabled to fulfil it.

Some allowance, too, must undoubtedly be made for the *youth* of the parties, and for the excitement which must ever be felt by young persons, in taking part in any thing which is so publicly performed as Confirmation usually is.

It is undoubtedly possible, that many of those who deeply feel the importance of the work in which they are engaged, may, nevertheless, be betrayed into a levity of demeanour,

which, though it wear the appearance of unconcern, may be in reality, nothing more than the overflowings of youthful joyousness of heart. Still, even this, on such an occasion, is unseasonable and wrong: and *to say the least*, is calculated to cause this Holy Ordinance to be evil spoken of by those who are hostile to it.

In this (and indeed in all things of a spiritual nature) very much must always depend upon the Ministers of the several Parishes.

If every Minister were careful to explain to the young persons the solemn nature of the profession involved in Confirmation, and the awful sin which must be incurred by those who make such a profession thoughtlessly and carelessly;—if he were cautious in admitting no one to Confirmation, but those whom he conscientiously believes to be sincere, and who give *some* evidence of a humble desire to be made the true servants and children of God; if on the appointed day, he were to accompany them to the place of Confirmation, and back again,—never losing sight of them, but keeping them constantly under his own eye;—If, I say, every Minister were careful to do all this, improper Candidates would be rejected, and the Service of Confirmation, would then appear what the Church intended it to be, a gracious and edifying ceremony, instead of being, what it frequently becomes, a solemn mockery of God.

It is very much to be wished, that it were possible for the young persons of each Parish to be Confirmed in their own Parish Church.

They would then feel, that the ceremony was one of a strictly religious character, and there would be none of that

excitement of the animal spirits which must more or less be felt, where young people resort to a neighbouring Town, and meet numbers of their own age assembled from the surrounding Parishes. But this, however desirable, must of course be impracticable, so long as the Districts over which our Bishops preside are so very extensive as they now are.

But to return to our subject ;—however Confirmation may in some instances be abused, it is by no means necessary that this should be the case. The fault is not in the institution, but in those who use it irreverently.

The question which we have to ask on this and similar subjects, is not whether a ceremony has been abused or not, but *whether it is, or is not, an Ordinance of God.*

If it be one of God's institutions, it is our duty humbly and thankfully to use it, and to do all in our power to prevent the abuse of it.

That Confirmation, or "the laying on of hands," is an institution of God, we cannot deny. It is mentioned by St. Paul, in Heb. vi. 2. as one of the fundamental "Principles of the Doctrine of Christ." It has moreover been practised in every age of the Church since the days of Christ, and was never neglected until comparatively modern times. It is not for us to say that it is not an essential part of Christian Discipline. St. Paul tells us that it is ; and we shall shew our wisdom by listening to an inspired Apostle, and to the voice of Christ's universal Church, rather than to the carnal reasonings of a few objectors in modern times.

In conclusion, let me beg of you to read and think over what I have said.



Do not be frightened if you are told that the "writer is in darkness and does not know the truth;" this is always said by all persons, of those who differ from them.

I might have said so of those who differ from the Church of England, but I have refrained from speaking harshly of them or their opinions. I have merely stated and attempted to defend the truth, and have carefully abstained from condemning what I believe to be error. Be not carried away then by any reproachful remarks which these pages may elicit. Be not too ready to be imposed on by that affected pity which spiritual Pride ever pretends to entertain for those who presume to think for themselves. If what I have said be not all grounded on Scripture, I do not ask you to believe it. But, if it be—and recollect that I have produced Scripture in support of every statement—then it is your bounden duty to receive it as the Doctrine of God's Holy word.

The Spirit of God alone can fit us for receiving the Truth. The humble, teachable disciple is taught from on high, while the arrogant self-conceited professor is left to grope in darkness. In the case of Divine knowledge, as in all other things, "He filleth the hungry with good things, but the rich He sendeth empty away."

Let us then ask of Him to give us this hunger,—this earnest desire to know and to obey the Truth! Let us go to Him, as little children, and ask Him to take us, as it were, into His School, let us entreat Him to bear with our ignorance, our slowness, our stupidity,—to "*make us understand the way of His Statutes,*" and to "*choose the way of Truth.*"

## APPENDIX.

*On Certain Passages in the Burial Service.*

It is a common notion, that in the Burial Service of the Church of England, all who are buried are spoken of as undoubtedly saved. This, however, is a very great mistake. There are three sentences which seem to favour that notion. They are the following:—

Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto Himself the soul of our dear brother, here departed, we therefore commit his body to the ground: earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to Eternal Life through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"We give Thee hearty thanks, for that it hath pleased Thee, to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world:"

"That when we depart this life, we may rest in Him, as our hope is, this our brother doth."

Now, every one of these passages is most strikingly appropriate, when used over one who has really died in the true faith of Jesus Christ. But every one of them may also be used without impropriety, over the grave of those, whose Eternal Prospects seem to us to be involved in gloom.

The first sentence does not refer to the Resurrection of the individual buried, but to the Resurrection of the whole body of believers, without reference to him. The meaning is this:—"We are here committing our dear brother's body to the ground to be turned to decay and corruption; but we do so with a full and firm belief in that great article of our Creed 'the Resurrection of the dead.' Though we here witness a Spectacle of Mortality, yet the sight does not diminish our belief in the Immortality which awaits the children of God at the last day. We therefore commit his body to the ground, in sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to Eternal Life." If the individual's Resurrection had been meant, it would have been "in sure and certain hope of his Resurrection to Eternal Life." If you have any doubt on the subject, the form appointed for those that are buried in the Sea (at the end of the Psalms in the Prayer Book) will remove it. The same Service is to be used, only instead of saying "we commit his body to the ground, &c." the following is to be said, "We therefore commit his body to the deep, to be turned into corruption, looking for the Resurrection of the body (when the Sea shall give up her dead) and the Life of the World to come."

As to the expression, in the same sentence, "it hath pleased Almighty God, to take unto Himself the soul of our dear brother," this is a constant way of speaking of Death. Solomon, in the Book of Ecclesiastes, speaking of Death in general, says, "Then shall the dust return to the Earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it." (Ecc. xii 7.).



The second passage, in which "we give hearty thanks to God, for delivering our brother out of the miseries of the world," may be used over the grave of any one. We are bound to thank God for every dispensation of His Providence, however afflictive. We know that the departed is removed out of a miserable world, and for that we thank God. We are silent as to his *future* state, for whatever we may fear, it is impossible for us to know any thing.

The third, in which we say, "as our hope is, this our brother doth," is the strongest expression in the Service. But still, as we cannot possibly tell what a man's state is in the unseen world,—as we cannot tell what God may have been pleased to do for his soul, even in the very hour of death,—we may undoubtedly make use of the above expression, and, like Abraham, "hope even against hope."

FINIS.







